

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS HANOI 000381

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/BCLTV; EAP/RSP; S/CT

E.O. 12958: NA

TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [VM](#) [ARF](#) [ASEAN](#) [CNARC](#)

SUBJECT: POSITIVE ON ASEAN COUNTERTERRORISM INITIATIVES

REF: Hanoi 1947

1. (U) According to Ministry of Foreign Affairs ASEAN Department (MFA/ASEAN) expert Nguyen Thanh Huy, the GVN "is fully committed" to the international struggle against terrorism and will accede to ASEAN's "Agreement on Information Exchange and Establishment of Communication Procedures" signed last May by Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. "It is only a matter of time" until Vietnam accedes, he claimed, while declining to predict exactly when. He added that deliberations within the GVN leadership are "nearing completion," however.

2. (U) Huy praised the three-day security conference held in January in Manila at which the Philippines, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand agreed to form a joint committee to boost multilateral cooperation against terrorism and "other transnational crimes." Huy also pointed to a January police conference in Indonesia, attended by GVN Ministry of Public Security Director General Major General Truong Huu Quoc, at which officials pledged to strengthen counterterrorism cooperation and establish special counterterrorism task forces in ASEAN member countries. Vietnam "is looking forward" to hosting the third annual senior conference on transnational crime, scheduled for June 2003 in Hanoi, he added.

3. (U) Huy claimed that, while the GVN leadership believes Vietnam is a less likely terrorist target than some other ASEAN members, events such as September 11 and Bali have clearly demonstrated that the terrorist forces "have a long reach."

4. (SBU) COMMENT. Huy is a focal point for counterterrorism issues within MFA/ASEAN (and, as a result, we are considering him as a potential IV grantee). We understand that he has written extensively on ASEAN counterterrorism initiatives within the MFA. It is encouraging that such helpful views regarding the seriousness of the war on terrorism and the imperative of regional cooperation appear to be circulating among the leadership.
BURGHARDT